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THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE : DOCTRINE AND REUNION.

WE have been told that the Prayer Book controversies were not so much as mentioned at the Lambeth Conference—either in private conversation or in public debate. By something that seems to be almost miraculous the most outstanding event in the recent history of the Church of England would appear to have passed into oblivion. The Records of the Conference prove that it had been mentioned, for one of the additional prayers is quoted in full and anyone familiar with the contents of the Deposited Book and the discussions associated with it, will find that the Deposited Book has been accepted as the official exposition of the doctrine of the Church of England by the Lambeth Conference. This is of course in keeping with the declaration in the Preface (1928): “If the minds of any be troubled because we have allowed another Order of Holy Communion as well as the old, and have made further provision for the communion of the sick, let them not think that we mean thereby any change of doctrine or intend that the Sacrament be used otherwise than our Lord appointed.” Most churchfolk are aware that whatever the intention of the Bishops may have been the Divinity Professors of the University of Cambridge—not to mention other prominent theologians—maintained that a change of doctrine had been made. But we cannot expect the Episcopate to hold that the Professors and those who think with them are right, and thereby admit their own Preface to be wrong.

Action by consultative bodies is determined by principles. Behind Reports, Resolutions and Encyclical there is a collective mind that adopts certain bases, even when it has secured unanimity by a process of compromise. The Indian Church Scheme has been blessed by providing for a great experiment which for the time being puts the new Province in the Universal Church—when it comes into being—out of communion with the Anglican Communion, or perhaps it may be more accurate to say makes the new Church an autocephalous Church with some of its Clergy and members in personal communion with the Anglican Communion, and others cannot be so considered, although in India they are in communion with one another. Making all allowance for the dread of schism which haunted the minds of many Anglican Bishops, this does not seem a very brave decision. It was, however, all that could be hoped for from the Bishops in Conference who were faced by the fact that the Union is inevitable, and to make any pronouncement that would oppose barriers would in the long run do more harm than good to the Anglican Communion.

The New Province in the Universal Church will have characteristics of its own and its influence on the future development of Reunion movements at home and abroad may be the reverse of

what the Lambeth Conference desired. We are convinced that the Church will in time be ministered to by men in Episcopal Orders, but we do not believe that the theory and outlook of the Lambeth Bishops who made this conclusion inevitable will be adopted by the United Church.

"In the experience of many of us this heritage of Faith and Order seems to be one and indivisible, and to have its roots in the redemptive method of God in the Incarnation. To those who share that view the historic Order and the prominence of sacramental worship which commonly accompanies it stand for and bear constant witness to the God-given element in the Christian life, which is prior to and independent of all subjective feeling on our part. But whether or not we find Faith and Order thus welded together in our experience, we are all united in thankfulness for the heritage that is ours; and for it we are bound to stand."

We all agree with the last sentence and have to maintain our historic Episcopate as the oldest and best accredited continuous method of Church Government, but we fail to see that it has its root with the Faith of the Church in the redemptive method of the Incarnation. Bishops who hold this view cannot possibly consider the non-Episcopally ordained Ministries as "real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church." We are aware how this statement, although signed by Drs. Davidson and Lang, Drs. Talbot and Frere, has been attacked by the assailants of the South Indian Scheme. It had been urged by leading Non-conformist Divines on the large Committee of the Lambeth Conference (The Unity of the Church), and it is passed over in silence by the Committee which affirms the ambiguous statement in "The Appeal to all Christian people" (1920). If anything the difficulties in the way of Intercommunion of individuals are made greater in 1930 than they were in 1920, and we have instead the exhortation to co-operation in Evangelism with Christians of other communions. We are grateful for this, but can only regret that when souls are won for Christ they will remain without the privilege of Inter-communion, when they become attached to Anglican and Non-Anglican Churches. For we do not envisage co-operative Evangelism on the part of Anglicans and Orthodox or Old Catholics. At the best the Evangelized can only expect, if they have become members of other Churches than the Anglican, a discriminating hospitality at the Table of the Lord in the Anglican Churches. This is the penalty paid for not being members of Churches that have the Apostolic Succession.

If there is a drawing back from the steps forward made since 1920 with reference to the Non-Episcopal Churches there has been a great advance in connection with the Old Catholic and Orthodox Churches. We are told that when the Archbishop of Utrecht was asked to consecrate Señor Cabrera in Spain, he refused because, "among other reasons, Cabrera and his friends had adopted as their doctrinal basis the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England" (Moss, *The Old Catholic Churches and Reunion*, p. 33), and in the *Résumé* of the Discussions between Anglican and Ortho-

dox Bishops it is stated that the Anglican Bishops declared "that the doctrine of the Anglican Church is authoritatively expressed in the Book of Common Prayer, and that the meaning of the XXXIX Articles must be interpreted in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer." This at once raises the question whether Articles drawn up as a Theological statement of belief are to be jettisoned, when they are in conflict with certain interpretations of the devotional words in the Formularies used in public service.

The Conference passed a Resolution that there is nothing in the Declaration of Utrecht, i.e. in the Old Catholic Declaration of Doctrine made in 1889 which is inconsistent with the teaching of the Church of England. The Old Catholics owe their Episcopal Organization to the Church in Holland, and the members of the Episcopal Body are bound by a compact with the Utrecht Church not to consecrate other Bishops without its consent. It is true that in Switzerland the orientation of the Old Catholic Church is more reformed than that of Holland. The schism between the Old Catholics occurred after the Council in Trent—the formal separation from Rome was a slow process—and the outlawing of the Old Catholics was signaled by their being the only non-Anglican Bishops who were not invited to the Vatican Council in 1869. In the early part of the nineteenth century efforts were made to receive the Old Catholics of Holland into communion with Rome on condition that they surrendered their opposition to the Bull that condemned the supposed Five Propositions of Jansen. They refused to do this for the Archbishop declared he could not find the condemned opinions in Jansen's works. They were quite willing to condemn the Five propositions and to promise future obedience, but they could not say the propositions represented the teaching of Jansen. Later in 1854 the Pope issued his declaration that the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary should be held as necessary to salvation. The Old Catholic Bishops rejected this dogma and appealed to a General Council. In 1889 the Old Catholic Bishops, five in number, issued the declaration which re-affirms their rejection of certain Bulls and later Roman Pronouncements and refused to accept the decrees of the Council of Trent in matters of discipline, "and as for the dogmatic decisions of that Council, we accept them only so far as they are in harmony with the teaching of the primitive Church." They accept the Œcumenical Councils of the undivided Church of the first thousand years.

The teaching on the Eucharist is set forth in Clause 6 :

"Considering that the Holy Eucharist has always been the true central point of Catholic worship, we consider it our duty to declare that we maintain with perfect fidelity the ancient Catholic doctrine concerning the Sacrament of the Altar, by believing that we receive the Body and the Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ under the species of bread and wine. The Eucharistic celebration in the Church is neither the continual repetition nor a renewal of the expiatory sacrifice which Jesus offered once for all upon the Cross ; but it is a sacrifice because it is the perpetual commemoration of the sacrifice offered upon the Cross, and it is the act by which we represent upon earth

and appropriate to ourselves the one offering which Jesus Christ makes in Heaven, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews ix. 11, 12, for the salvation of redeemed humanity, by appearing for us in the presence of God (Heb. ix. 24). The character of the Holy Eucharist being thus understood, it is, at the same time, a sacrificial feast, by means of which the faithful in receiving the Body and Blood of our Saviour, enter into communion with one another (1 Cor. i. 17)."

We are not now concerned with the latter part of the declaration on the Sacrifice, but we are bound to examine what the reception of the Body and Blood means. The words "under the species of Bread and Wine" are the words that have been the storm centre of the Prayer Book controversy and it is necessary to see what it means in practice in Utrecht. "The Archbishop of Utrecht stated that it was the custom of the Old Catholic Church to communicate in one kind only, but any communicant could request Communion in both kinds." How far this is accurate may be judged from the fact that everywhere, except in Holland, Communion is given in both kinds and "the custom of the Old Catholic Church mentioned in the Lambeth Conference Report refers to Holland only." It seems to us that there was insufficient care, or knowledge shown by the Bishops who inquired into the subject. With some exceptions, insignificant from a doctrinal standpoint, the Liturgy used in Holland is that of the Roman Mass. The Sacramental Elements are reserved for the sick, and in Holland Benediction is given with the ciborium containing the Reserved Host. We can only judge a statement by the practices associated with it, and certainly Benediction is not a custom of the Church of the first thousand years!

When we pass from the Old Catholics to the Orthodox Church we have references to Sacramental teaching which display the ascendancy in the minds of the Bishops of the leading teaching that led to the rejection of the Deposited Book by Parliament.

In the *Résumé* of the Discussions between the Orthodox and the English Bishops we have the following paragraph:

"It was stated by the Anglican Bishops that in the Sacrament of the Eucharist 'the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper' and that 'the Body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the Supper only after a heavenly and spiritual manner,' and that after Communion the consecrated elements remaining are regarded sacramentally as the Body and Blood of Christ; further, that the Anglican Church teaches the doctrine of Eucharistic sacrifice as explained in the answer of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to Pope Leo XIII on Anglican Ordinations; and also that in the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice the Anglican Church prays that 'by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His blood, we and all Thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His passion' as including the whole company of faithful people living and departed."

On the last sentence we have only to remark that the Prayer of Oblation in the Book of Common Prayer is a Post-Communion Prayer, that all reference to a Eucharistic offering for the dead is excluded in the Book of Common Prayer and that the exegesis of the Prayer given by the Anglican Bishops finds no support in the

Prayer Book of the Church of England. It may be supported by references to the Deposited Book and is an additional proof of the dangers which that Book opened before the National Church.

We are, however, concerned with the quotation from the Twenty-eighth Article. We suppose that on the principle that the Articles are to be interpreted by the Prayer Book it is right to quote a sentence from an Article and to omit the following sentence when it is one that may place the commentator on the doctrine supposed to be taught, in a perplexing position. "The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten is faith." We believe that the Church of Ireland Bishops were summoned to attend the Lambeth Conference and that they remembered the words of the Revisers' Preface to the Irish Book of Common Prayer :

"As concerning the Holy Communion, some of our brethren were at first earnest that we should remove from the Prayer Book certain expressions which they thought might seem to lend some pretext for the teaching of doctrine, concerning the Presence of Christ in that Sacrament, repugnant to that set forth in the Articles of Religion, wherein it is expressly declared that the Body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the Supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner, and that the means whereby it is therein received and eaten is Faith ; but upon a full and impartial review, we have not found in the Formularies any just warrant for such teaching."

We wonder whether the words "Church of England" and "Anglican Bishops" contained in the Resolutions are intended to draw a distinction between the teaching of the Church of England, i.e. of the Deposited Book, and those branches of the Anglican Communion that still hold by the doctrine of the Book of Common Prayer ?

We also should be glad of references in the Formularies in support of the dogmatic assertion that "after Communion the consecrated elements remaining are regarded sacramentally as the Body and Blood of Christ." We have failed to find any such reference in the Prayer Book or Articles. The one reference in the Book of Common Prayer is to their reverent consumption and this commands the Priest and the Communicants reverently to eat and drink the same. The Elements have been consecrated to a holy use and that use is concluded when they have been employed in feeding the souls of the faithful who have with faith received them. It is true that the Deposited Book takes a different view of the Elements and we have seen that the Old Catholics employ them in the service of Benediction. The endeavour to explain the Anglican doctrine in terms that satisfy the Greeks is based not on a frank study of the Formularies and Articles of the Church of England, but on a study based on the Deposited Book. No clearer proof can be given of the declaration of the Cambridge Professors that there is a change of doctrine in that much discussed Book, and we fear that the Lambeth Conference cannot in its efforts to foster closer relations with Old Catholics and Orthodox, be excused from using that Book as the exposition of the

teaching of the Church of England. We shall see during the coming months what this means and how far the Greek conception of Economy in expounding the Protestantism of the Church of England is warranted by facts. Economy is defined as a "technical term representing administrative action to meet a temporary situation without prejudice to any principle of ecclesiastical order." Something more than ecclesiastical order is at stake—what we find is something more than a temporary departure from rule. We have a doctrinal interpretation which cannot be supported by the formularies of the Book of Common Prayer and by the Thirty-nine Articles. The exposition given is opposed to the plain teaching of these documents and is not to be slurred by the contention that "it is quite true—and we should all agree—that the full meaning of the Holy Communion is only attained with the reception, and that is as carefully guarded in the Orthodox Church as in our own." This is not, we may say, with all respect, the issue at stake, for would not Roman Catholics agree also? What we have in mind is the absolute statement that to assert we receive "the Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ under the species of bread and wine" is "not inconsistent with the teaching of the Church of England." This is a matter of first-rate importance. No wonder the Conference does not look back upon the Reformation as determining the character of our Church as compared and contrasted with that of the Unreformed Churches.

It is obvious to anyone reading the Lambeth Documents that there has been a distinct hardening of the views of the Conference in its attitude to Non-Episcopal Churches through its emphasis on the Historic Episcopate as rooted in the Incarnation, for it is plain that whatever the Bishops may think on this subject, the Bishops who hold this view succeeded in causing the Conference to adopt its attitude. We recall that the Report of the Sub-Committee of the Conference of 1888 contained the passage :

"It would be difficult for us to enter into more intimate relations with that (the Orthodox) Church so long as it retains the use of icons, the invocation of Saints, and the cultus of the Blessed Virgin; although it is but fair to state that the Greeks, in sanctioning the use of pictorial representations for the purpose of promoting devotion, expressly disclaim the sin of idolatry, which they conceive would attach to the bowing down before sculptured or molten images. Moreover the decrees of the second Council of Nicaea, sanctioning the use of icons, were framed in a spirit of reaction against the rationalizing measures, as they were regarded, of the iconoclastic Emperors. The Greeks might be reminded that the decrees of that Council, having been deliberately rejected seven years afterwards by the Council of Frankfort, and not having been accepted by the Latin Church till after the lapse of two centuries, and then only under Papal influence, cannot be regarded as binding upon the Church."

Has there been any change in the Orthodox Church since these words were written? As far as we are aware there has been no theological change but some of the Greek Churches have followed the lead of the Commission of the Holy Synod of Constantinople, which reported in 1922 that on Orthodox principles Anglican Orders presented the same features which had led the Orthodox

Churches to accept Roman Catholic, Coptic, Jacobite, Armenian and Assyrian Orders. At the Cheltenham Church Congress in 1928 Archbishop Germanos who, on behalf of the Orthodox Bishops, signed the *Résumé of Discussions* with the Anglican Bishops, said: "Why should we not think that a time is coming when the Catholic nucleus which always existed in the Anglican Church should not prevail over the whole body, so that it would appear in that form which would make reunion with our Orthodox Church possible? Meanwhile, the duty of the Orthodox is not to break the definite bond which binds us to the Anglican Communion, but to help in such an evolution, through friendly intercourse and in a spirit of friendly discussion." At the Lausanne Conference (1927) the same Bishop speaking for his brethren said: "We cannot conceive how agreement can be made possible between two conceptions which agree that the existence of the ministry of the Church is by the will of Christ, but differ as to whether that ministry was instituted by Christ Himself in its three degrees of bishop, priest and deacon. In the same way we judge there to be no practical value in an agreed formula as to the necessity of Sacraments in the Church when there is a fundamental difference between the Churches not only in regard to their number but also as to their general significance, as to their essential nature and as to their particular effects. This being so, we cannot entertain the idea of a reunion which is confined to a few common points of verbal agreement; for according to the Orthodox Church, where the totality of faith is absent there can be no *communio in sacris*."

We have quoted these passages in order that the situation may be made plain. The Conference of 1930 has given an interpretation of the terms of Reunion based on the acceptance of a certain view of Ordination and the totality of the faith which satisfies the Old Catholics of Utrecht and the Orthodox Churches. The keystone of the agreement is the Apostolic Succession. We cannot get away from it in the Lambeth Reports. It is the central point, and as long as this is the case and Churches depend for their reality in the sight of God and man on the possession of this Succession, carrying with it the acceptance of teaching such as we have outlined, we can see little hope of Home Reunion between the National Church and the great Non-Episcopal Churches. We believe that this conclusion does not express the mind of the people of the Church of England, and the duty is laid upon all those who value Faith above everything else and Fellowship in Christ in Truth as the foundation of Christian Brotherhood, to work even more resolutely for the drawing closer together those who never should have been separated in the bonds of holy love and reverence for Truth. We are glad when barriers between Churches are thrown down, but this ought not to involve our erecting barriers between us and our Sister Churches of the Reformation. And we fear that the Lambeth Conference has done this and has compromised the Reformed and Protestant character of the Church of England, whose Bishops had the leadership in the Conference.